



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

Edinburgh Research Explorer

The discovery of two missing Alice Thornton manuscripts

Citation for published version:

Beattie, C 2019, 'The discovery of two missing Alice Thornton manuscripts', *Notes & Queries*, vol. 66, no. 4, pp. 547-553. <https://doi.org/10.1093/notesj/gjz116>

Digital Object Identifier (DOI):

[10.1093/notesj/gjz116](https://doi.org/10.1093/notesj/gjz116)

Link:

[Link to publication record in Edinburgh Research Explorer](#)

Document Version:

Peer reviewed version

Published In:

Notes & Queries

Publisher Rights Statement:

This is a pre-copyedited, author-produced version of an article accepted for publication in Notes & Queries following peer review. The version of record Cordelia Beattie, The Discovery of Two Missing Alice Thornton Manuscripts, Notes and Queries, gjz116, <https://doi.org/10.1093/notesj/gjz116> is available online at: <https://academic.oup.com/nq/advance-article/doi/10.1093/notesj/gjz116/5570873?searchresult=1>.

General rights

Copyright for the publications made accessible via the Edinburgh Research Explorer is retained by the author(s) and / or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing these publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

Take down policy

The University of Edinburgh has made every reasonable effort to ensure that Edinburgh Research Explorer content complies with UK legislation. If you believe that the public display of this file breaches copyright please contact openaccess@ed.ac.uk providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.



Dr Cordelia Beattie
Department of History
University of Edinburgh
Old Medical School. West Wing
Teviot Place
Edinburgh
EH8 9AG
0131 650 3778
Cordelia.Beattie@ed.ac.uk

THE DISCOVERY OF TWO MISSING ALICE THORNTON MANUSCRIPTS

The autobiographical writings of Alice Wandesford Thornton (1626-1707) were first edited in 1875 for the Surtees Society. The editor, Charles Jackson, drew on three books of her life to put together one composite account but also had seen 'a small memorandum book' (Thornton, Autobiography, 347), which he considered to be the original draft of her autobiography.¹ At this date all four manuscripts were in the hands

¹ Alice Thornton, The Autobiography of Mrs. Alice Thornton, of East Newton, Co. York, ed. Charles Jackson, Publications of the Surtees Society, LVII (Durham, 1875), xiv-xv, 347. Jackson acknowledges that one Charles Best Norcliffe has shared a similar manuscript with him but Norcliffe later alleged that the edition was more properly his. See R. A. Anselment, 'Seventeenth-Century Manuscript Sources of Alice Thornton's Life', SEL, xlv

of the Comber family; the three books of her life he edited were lent to Jackson by Henry George Wandesford Comber, and the memorandum book was loaned by Thomas Comber of Newton-le-Willows.² When Alice Wandesford Thornton died, she left ‘three Books of my owne Meditations and Transactions of my life, and all the residue of my Papers and Books written with my owne hand’ (Thornton, Autobiography, 338) to her daughter, Alice Thornton Comber, widow of Thomas Comber (1645-99), Dean of Durham Cathedral from 1689. However, the whereabouts of the manuscripts was unknown for many years until in 1982 and 1994 two (the first and third manuscripts used by Jackson respectively) came up for auction and were sold to a private collector, Paula Peyraud; they were then resold in 2009, and both were bought by the British Library. I have now traced the two other manuscripts.

The first manuscript I located is the ‘memorandum book’ Jackson described in 1875 as:

a small memorandum book three and a half by two and a half inches in size, and consisting of about 196 pages, which has the appearance of having been Mrs. Thornton’s original ‘Booke of Remembrances of all the remarkable deliverances of myselfe, husband, and children wth their births and other remarks as conserning myselfe and family beginning from the year 1625’ (Thornton, Autobiography, 347).³

(2005), 155 n. 11. I am grateful to Suzanne Trill and Ray Anselment for their comments on earlier drafts and to Lisa Liddy for her research assistance.

² Thornton, Autobiography, xv.

³ The quotation is the title given in the manuscript on page 1.

The Catalogue of English Literary Manuscripts 1450–1700 (CELM) classify this text as *ThA 6 and untraced.⁴ But the manuscript is still in private hands and has never left the Comber family.⁵ The text is currently kept in a cardboard sleeve, labelled ‘Original MS. Diary of Mrs Alice Thornton, 1625-1661 AD.’ and bears the name R. H. J. Comber.

The book measures 130 mm by 95 mm but has probably been rebound and the pages inside, also trimmed, measure 105mm by 75mm.⁶ It contains 168 numbered pages, followed by four blank pages, an unnumbered index of nine pages (173-81), and some unpaginated addenda - headed ‘Remembr to incert some Remarks for gotten in this first Book’ (182-96) - the last six of the addenda plus two blank pages are slightly smaller, 75mm by 46mm, but stitched into the current binding (189-98). Thornton’s writing ends on what I calculate as page 196. Apart from the number of blank pages before the index, this is the same as Raymond Anselment’s description of the Yale microfilm Wallace Notestein acquired in 1936 from Reverend Edward Philip Comber; in size it is also close to the 4 by 3 inches as described by Comber in a letter to Notestein.⁷

⁴ Peter Beal, Catalogue of English Literary Manuscripts, 1450-1700 (CELM), at <https://perma.cc/96W8-6EM6> , hereafter CELM.

⁵ I am grateful to Mr P. Comber in Shropshire for allowing me to first examine this manuscript in December 2018 and now to quote from it. Hereafter I will refer to it as the Book of Remembrances.

⁶ Jackson’s measurements of books 1 and 2 were also inaccurate; see n15 below.

⁷ R. A. Anselment, “‘My first Booke of my Life’: The Apology of a Seventeenth-Century Gentry Woman’, Prose Studies, xxiv (2001), 13 n. 1, 14 n. 2. This is a fuller description

CELM lists the source of the microfilm as *ThA 5, separately to *ThA 6.⁸ However, Anselment has argued that the source for the microfilm was the ‘small memorandum book’ that Jackson saw.⁹ Anselment has now compared images of the manuscript still in Comber family hands with the microfilm and confirmed to me that this manuscript was indeed the source of the Yale microfilm.¹⁰ In addition, Anselment has previously described a passage in which William Thornton threatened to kill himself with a penknife (54-9) as being obscured by ‘an overlapping and partial page in the microfilmed manuscript’ (Anselment, ‘The Apology’, 11); in the manuscript the top part of pages 55 and 56 is missing which explains the overlapping page on the microfilm. As the traced manuscript, *ThA6 in CELM’s terms, is the source for the microfilm, there is therefore no missing *ThA 5 as these two texts are one and the same.

The second manuscript traced is an even more significant discovery. CELM notes that this manuscript was owned in the 1930s by Edward Philip Comber but since then has been untraced.¹¹ Until now the only way to ascertain its contents was from the sections included in the 1875 edition.¹² I found the manuscript amongst the Dean

than that given by CELM. For the letter see Alice Thornton, My First Booke of My Life, ed. R. A. Anselment (Lincoln, 2014), lvi, n46.

⁸ CELM.

⁹ Anselment, ‘Seventeenth-Century Manuscript Sources’, 154 n. 7.

¹⁰ I am grateful to Professor Anselment for viewing a number of images of the found manuscript and confirming this (pers. comm. March 2019).

¹¹ Thornton, Autobiography, xiv.

¹² CELM *ThA 5.

Comber Papers, in the possession of Durham Cathedral.¹³ The online catalogue gives only a brief description of these papers, ‘c.20 volumes and 1 box’, which were donated to them in 1969 by one A. G. Hickson, but it does note that they included ‘a journal of his wife Alice’.¹⁴ However, in the box, a handwritten inventory written by Hickson in July 1969 lists as the third item given as ‘Part of Mrs Alice Thornton’s memoirs 1668’. When I located that manuscript among the ‘c.20 volumes’, it became evident that this was the missing second manuscript of Alice Wandesford Thornton, Dean Comber’s mother in law and not his wife, Alice Thornton Comber, and that it survives in its entirety.

It is bound in brown leather, is the same size as the first manuscript now in the British Library, and has a similar label on its spine.¹⁵ Although the label on the first manuscript is very damaged, that on the Durham manuscript is only faded and seems to be labelled as ‘Thornton’s Memoirs’ with a volume number. On the flyleaf of the Durham manuscript is the handwritten annotation:

E Libris Tho^{ae} Comber

De Creech S^t Michael

¹³ Durham Cathedral Library, Dean Comber Papers, GB-0036-COM, Comber 7 (hereafter Comber 7). It is cited with the kind permission of the Chapter of Durham Cathedral.

¹⁴ See “Collection Level Description: Dean Comber Papers - Durham University” at <https://perma.cc/6RW3-SV3X>

¹⁵ British Library (hereafter BL), Add MS 88897/1 is described in the library catalogue as an ‘Octavo notebook with original calf binding, gilt-stamped, much worn. 155 x 105mm.’ Jackson described both as ‘bound in brown leather ... five inches by three’: Thornton, Autobiography, xv.

En Comitatu

Somerset:

1800

The contents of this Book were writ in by the hand of Mrs Alice Thornton, my
Great, Great, Grand-Mother.

This is virtually the same inscription as that on the flyleaf of the first manuscript now in the British Library.¹⁶ In pencil, the same person who has labelled the Durham manuscript 'Comber 7' has added the words 'Part of' above the last sentence. However, it is not that some of Alice Thornton's memoirs are missing but that part of the book has been written in by Thomas Comber, her great, great grandson. Alice's text is numbered from 1 to 291 and then Thomas's hand fills pages 292-341. For ten pages he writes about Alice Thornton and then on page 303 he starts his own memoirs, written in Latin. Both the length of the manuscript and its internal contents confirm that this was the second manuscript used by Jackson in 1875, CELM's *ThA 5.

Only about a quarter of the second manuscript was included in the 1875 edition, which largely drew on the first manuscript. For the edition, entries from each manuscript were inserted in chronological order, meaning that Thornton's original arrangement was lost. As much of the content of the second manuscript is previously unknown, I have set out the contents in Appendix 1. The third manuscript refers to 'my first Booke of my Life' (BL, Add MS 88897/2, 60), manuscript one, also in the British Library, and 'my first Booke of my Widdowed Condition' (BL, Add MS 88897/2, 61), this

¹⁶ See CELM ThA 1; now BL, Add. MS 88897/1.

second manuscript.¹⁷ What is clear from the contents, though, is that only a minority of the text relates specifically to her widowhood (Comber 7, 5-28). Then, as William Thornton died intestate on 17 September 1668, the book recalls earlier discussions with him about his debts and their lands. As some of the land being referred to had been inherited by Alice Thornton from her father, Charles Wandesford, this leads on to a discussion about her father's lost will and book of advice to his son, George Wandesford, content not in book one (Comber 7, 36-101). This then segues into the section on her youth, which is largely in the form of prayers and thanksgivings to God for saving her life on a number of occasions. There is some overlap here with material in book one, but this becomes more obvious from page 129, when she discusses her life after marrying, as she starts to use similar headings.¹⁸ This is the case for the rest of the book, with the main new material relating to legal advice about her jointure (Comber 7, 240), the settlement of lands on her children (Comber 7, 246), and mortgages charged on some of that land which she found out about after husband's death (Comber 7, 260). All these new sections are relevant to the administration of her husband's estate discussed at the start of the text. It should be noted, though, that even the sections with similar headings have been revised (see Appendix 2 for an example).

In some sections of the Durham manuscript, Thornton makes explicit cross-references to her first book. The first time is under the heading 'Vppon the Cure of Bleeding of the Hemorides I receaued at Scarbrough Aug: 1659' (Comber 7, 163).

Thornton mentions her mother recovering from an illness and then notes:

¹⁷ It also refers to the second book as 'my widowed booke': BL, Add MS 88897/2, 98.

¹⁸ For the contents of book one see Thornton, My First Booke of My Life, vii-xiii.

I referre to y^e solomn Praiers & thankes in my booke as allso the relations of y^e distractions on Church & state in y^e restoration of Of King Charles the Second in y^e yeare 1659. Together wth A full relation of my deare & hon^d Mothers last Sickness and Death Dec: 9th 1659 Page 168: till Page 179: in my first Booke' (Comber 7, 165-6).¹⁹

In a section on her son Robert's baptism in 1662, Alice Thornton noted: 'The fuller discription is Related in my booke of meditations on this subiect & allso of y^e first booke of my Life Page: 203' (Comber 7, 271). The first reference is likely to her Book of Remembrances in which she did discuss Robert's baptism;²⁰ she does use the term 'meditations' repeatedly in her table of contents to this manuscript, although she also used it in some of the section headings in books one and two.²¹ Towards the end of the Durham manuscript, Thornton recorded that 'The full Relation of my sad Condition The meditations there vppon. And the Present Cure my gracious God & fathr of mercys shewed to me. Is fully declared in my first Booke & allso a Booke of meditations made on Purposse in y^e yeare: Aug: 16. 1666' (Comber 7, p. 278). If we conclude that the 'Booke of meditations' is how she referred to the small manuscript that I have called the Book of Remembrances, this gives us a date for its initial composition. The dating seems credible because of the 168 numbered pages, only the first 38 are concerned with the years before 1660, and pages 106 onwards concern 1667-8.

¹⁹ See Thornton, My First Booke of My Life, 111-20.

²⁰ Book of Remembrances, 85-6.

²¹ Book of Remembrances, 173-80; Thornton, My First Booke of My Life, viii-x; Appendix

In the third book, Alice Thornton noted that she had ‘begun a Booke wherein I had entred very many & great remarkes of my course of life’ by 2 February 1669 (BL, Add MS 88897/2, 178), which has been assumed to be the first book as she also noted that ‘About March 25 1669, I was writing of my First Booke of my life’ (BL, Add MS 88897/2, 177).²² Anselment has argued that the Remembrances ‘appear to have been written not long before she began the first “Booke” of her life’.²³ However, we perhaps should see the texts as works which overlapped in composition rather than as each one written after the other. The addenda to both the Book of Remembrances and book one suggest that Thornton was working on the latter while still writing in the former. The first subject discussed under the heading ‘some Remarks for gotten’ in the small manuscript Alice Thornton referred to as ‘this first Book’ (182) is a great fall that she had at the age of three. In the manuscript of ‘My First Booke of My Life’, now edited by Anselment, she listed this event at the end of the work under the heading ‘A Recollection of memorable accidents & Passages forgotten to be Entred in to my Booke’.²⁴ This is similarly the case for the recollection of ‘the great deliverance I had from A Rape by Captains Innis a Scot’ which is in the addenda of both manuscripts.²⁵ By contrast, in the Durham manuscript the fall aged three and the attempted rape by

²² Anselment, ‘The Apology’, 2.

²³ Anselment, ‘The Apology’, 3.

²⁴ BL, Add MS 88897/1, 286; Thornton, My First Booke of My Life, 6, 216 n. 24.

²⁵ Book of Remembrances, 195; BL, Add MS 88897/1, 294-7; Thornton, My First Booke of My Life, 50-2.

Jeremy Smithson are included in the general narrative rather than as addenda.²⁶ Also, a dream about Nettleton's bailiff, which is included in the addenda to the Book of Remembrances, is not included in book one but is included in the Durham manuscript (book two).²⁷

The writing and rewriting of events can further be seen with reference to the penknife incident, referred to earlier. It is discussed in the Book of Remembrances but glossed over in her first book ('a strange accident that hapned me of a fright': Thornton, My First Booke of My Life, 141). It is then alluded to more directly in the second book ('a strainge accident y^t hapned me, when I was pretty big of him [Robert] of a fright w^{ch} came on me by a surprise of ye sight of a Penknife w^{ch} was nigh to haue hurt one': Comber 7, 265). However, her references to her husband's suicidal intentions are not repeated here.²⁸

Blank pages in the manuscripts also offer clues as to Alice Thornton's process of composition. A section in Comber 7 has a heading, 'Vppon a great fright I had at Oswolkirke. beeing big w^t Child concerning a Bond. 1662' (Comber 7, 222) but no content for five pages until there is a new heading, 'Vppon our Comming to liue att

²⁶ Comber 7, 112, 123. At this point in the manuscript, Thornton starts to mis-number her pages (they are all two out) but I use her numbering. For the attempted rape by Jeremy Smithson, see Book of Remembrances, 196; BL, Add MS 88897/1, 299; Thornton, My First Booke of My Life, 52.

²⁷ Book of Remembrances, 191-5; Comber 7, 232-4; Thornton, My First Booke of My Life, 132-4.

²⁸ Book of Remembrances, 54-9.

Newton after the new house was Buildd by M^r Thornton & my selfe it beeing on lune y^e 10th: 1662' (Comber 7, 227). This suggests that Alice Thornton planned to write something but did not return to it. Her third book too contains a number of blank pages spread throughout the manuscript.²⁹ In this text she also includes a comment that suggests she had been writing since she was young:

I was writing of my **first** Booke of my Life to enter the sad sicknesses & death of my deare husband together with all those afflictions befell me that yeare with the remarks of Gods dealing with my selfe, Husband, & Children till my Widdowed Condition, as I had don ever since I could remember from my first youth and childehood. (BL, Add MS 88897/2, 177)

It is worth emphasizing, though, that all the evidence points to the survival of only four autobiographical manuscripts. It has been suggested that there were five; CELM wrongly lists as separate manuscripts the untraced 'small memorandum book' and the original of the book which was copied onto a microfilm at Yale in 1936.³⁰ Thornton only referred to 'three books of ... my life' in her will (Thornton, Autobiography, 338), and the only other writing of hers referred to in these three books is a 'Book of Meditations', which I have argued is the Book of Remembrances. Thomas Comber, Dean

²⁹ BL, Add MS 88897/2; for a summary of its contents, including blank pages, see Anselment, 'Seventeenth-Century Manuscript Sources', 153 n.9.

³⁰ CELM, *ThA 1, *ThA 2, *ThA 4, *ThA 5 and *ThA 6. The Peyraud Auction, handled by Bloomsbury Auctions, also referred to there having been five volumes when selling two in 2009: M. E. Mulvihill, 'Literary Property Changing Hands: The Peyraud Auction (New York City, 6 May 2009)', Eighteenth-Century Studies, xliii (2009), 156.

Comber's great grandson, wrote at the end of Thornton's text in the Durham manuscript, 'there are other MS. Books in the family in her handwriting, but none which seem to give any connected account of her family affairs after this date' (Comber 7, 292).³¹ I therefore conclude that we have now traced all extant autobiographical writings by Alice Thornton and the time is ripe for a new appraisal of the nature of these works and her motives for writing them. The cross-references within them suggest that Thornton saw her manuscripts as texts that should be read together. Like other contemporaries such as Mary Rich, Countess of Warwick, Lady Anne Clifford and Lady Anne Halkett, Alice Thornton revised her life in a series of books. The rediscovery of these two manuscripts is thus important in that they will enable us to better appreciate Thornton's significance as an early modern writer.

CORDELIA BEATTIE

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

³¹ Underlining is in the original.

Appendix 1: The contents of Comber 7, Durham Cathedral Library

The following are the headings used in this manuscript, with Thornton's pagination in square brackets; blank pages are similarly noted, as is when there is no further content under a heading. <> denotes an interlineal insertion. [] an editorial insertion but these have been kept to a minimum.

[1] Iob. 10: 20.

[3] S^t Matt: 6: 33:

[4: blank page]

[5] Meditations in my Widdowed Condition

[7] A Prayer for <my> Selfe: for suport & comfort

[11-12: blank]

[13] An introduction to this Booke of the Remarkeable Prouidences. & passages of my Life. since my Widdowed Condition since September y^e 17th: 1668

[20-2: blank]

[23] An account of Delivrances from Death, & mercys Receaued since my deare husbands death begot my selfe, and three deare Children. Septembr. 17th. 1668:

[27] Vppon the seuerall accidents happened affter M^r Thorntons Death & of the Administration. & before.

[36] A discourse Vppon y^e Preservation, and discouery, of my deare & hon^{ord} Fathers Last will, & Testament, in y^e Rebellion of Ireland from y^e yeare 1640: till the yeare 1658:

[44] Of the Prouidence to me, in finding y^e Copy of my hon^{red} fathers booke of Aduise to his Son George Wandesforde.

[68] Of the maner how my hon^{red} Fathers Last will and Testament was found Affter the Losse of it for many yers

[85] Prayers, and meditations, and thankes giueings. vppon. the Miraculous Preseruati^{on} of my deare; & hon^{red} Fathers Booke of aduice to his Son George; as allso vppon the deliuran^{ce} of his Last will & Testament from destrucion And of its, beeing produced, againe in mercy. by w^{ch} meanes the Family was preserued. From Ruine: in the yeare 1656

[102] Prayers, meditations and Thankesgiuings to God for his infinit Mercys, and deliurances shewed to me, since I was borne, till I came into my widdow Estate, Sept: 17th: in y^e yeare: 1668: wth an account of his blesng^s

[129]³² Praiers, & meditations & thanksgiueings vppon The Change of my Condition from a Virgin Estate, since I came in to a Marriad Estate of Life w^{ch} was full of trouble, sorrow, & Changes in both my body And fortune. Since December 15th: 1651:

[133] Vppon my great deliurances & mercyes Recead of my first Child & the sicknesses w^{ch} followed 9 months Begining August 6: 1652: lasted till May 12th: 1653:

[142] Vppon the birth of my second Childe & Daughter Alice Thornton Borne at Hipswell on the 3^d. day of Ianu' in y^e yeare 1654:

[146] Meditations vppon the birth of my 3^d Childe Elizabeth Thornton borne y^e 14 of Feb. 1655:

[151] Miditations on y^e birth of my 4th Childe Katherine Thornton borne att Hipswell. Iune 12th: 1656. Baptised y^e 14th of Iune by M^r Sidall. wittness my deare mother, my neece. Best & M^r Thornton.

³² Recte 131; all subsequent page references are two out.

[155] The death of my 3^d Childe my deare Betty. who died the 5th of September: 1656.

[157] Vppon my desperate fall I had at Hipswell being wth Childe of my 5th: Childe Sept 14th: 1657:

[159] Meditations on my deliuerance of my first Son & affter my Restoration from my great fall of hm he being my fifth Childe borne at Hipswell. the 10th. day of December: 1657:

[163] Vppon the Cure of Bleeding of the Hemorides I receaued at Scarbrough Aug: 1659:

[166] Of King Charles the Second in y^e yeare 1659. Together wth A full relation of my deare & hon^d Mothers last Sickness and Death Dec: 9th 1659 Page 168: till Page 179: in my first Booke. [no further content]

[166] Meditations vppon my deliury of my 6th Childe William Thornton, & of his death. Aprill: 12th.³³ 1660: at St Nicholas my Aunt Norttons house. beeing my first Childe affter my Deare Mothers Decease. Dec: 9: 1659:

[175] Aprill 17: 1660 The birth of Willm Thornton

[181] Vppon my Husbands & Families Remouall from St Nickolas to Oswold-Church neare Newton lune: 1660. & my first coming from my owne Freinds, &, country:

[183] vppon my deare Naly deliurance from Death by Conuoltions May 29: 1660. at St Nickolas.

[185] Vppon my deare Kates deliurance from being Choaked w^t a pin at St Nickolas May 17: 1660:

[187-8: blank]

³³ Below she gives this date as the 17th which is consistent with the first book: Thornton, My First Booke of My Life, 120.

[189] Vpon my Husbands & Famelys Remouall from S^t Nickolas to Oswoldkirke nere

Newton. These accidents happned to me & mine. followig lune. 10th: 1660:

[191] Vppon my great and dangerous Sickness att Oswoldkirke Feb: 13: 1661

[209] Vppon my deare daughters preseruatiō from a wound in her belly: 1661:

[210] Vppon A Ly maide &, slander Raised on my selfe and my Seruant Iane Flouer by
Nan Robinson, att Oswoldkirke this year 1661:

[221] A deliurance from fire at Oswoldki[r]ke 1661:

[222] Vppon a great fright I had at Oswoldkirke. beeing big w^t Child consarning a Bond.
1662. [no text under this heading]

[223-6: blank]

[227] Vppon our Comming to liue att Newton after the new house was Builded by M^r
Thornton & my selfe it beeing on lune y^e 10th: 1662:

[232] My Dreame Nettlton

[234] Off the first Sacrament, Receaued at Easte Newton Affter y^e house was Builded, &
of the Grand Mercys I receaued at the hand of God. Deliured to M^r Thornton & my selfe.
wth many meditations Prayers, & thanksgiuing on it August 20th: 1662: May be fully
expresed in my first booke of my Life Page: 196. 197: 198. 199: [no further content]

[235] On the first coming to Newton of y^e Countrys Kind respects to me. lune: Iuly: 1662

[237] Vppon M^r Thorntons Settlement of his Estate by M^r Coluill before my deliury of my
Son Robert Thornton August 1662:

[240] My Cosen Couluills his letter to me vppon the sending for aduice vppon my
Ioynture Ded & M^r Ledgards Paper Booke w^{ch} ought to haue Rectified those faults: Aug:
22: 1662:

[246] A relation of y^e Passages happned before my yelding to cutt of the Settlnent of Burne Parke being made before marriage for y^e Prouission of my younger Children (May: 6th. 1658:)

[259] A Praier on y^e making Mr Coluills Deed. Aug: 62:

[260] An accompt of Morgages Charged vppon Laistrop or some p^t of y^t Land before Mr Colul⁻ settlement: w^{ch} I did not know of, till long affter. about y^e yeare 1668:

[263] Vppon my deliuerance, of my Son Robert Thornton, my third, Son. & seuenth Child, beeing the first, Childe; borne at the new house, at Easte=Newton whose birth was on Friday the 19th: of September: 1662.³⁴

[271] Vppon y^e Birth of my 8th Child loyce Thornt[o]n Sept: 23: 1665: In my first Booke: Page 209: w^t meditations therevppon. [no further content]

[272] A Relation of Mr Thorntons dangerous fit of the Pallssie at Steersby: No: 16th: 1665: Beeing entred in full w^t meditations vpp the sad dispensation & my weake condition I was brought into there by Related in my first Booke of my life Page: 211: [no further content]

[272] A Relation of my daughters loyce Thornt death Ian. 26. 1665. Meditations on it in my said first Booke. Page: 214: [no further content]

[272] Vpponn my daughter Alice her Preseruatiō form a surfett of Cold lūne: 13. 1665: The same Booke Page: 215: [no further content]

[272] A Relation of y^e Cutting of the Intaile & Deed of Settlement of M^r Couill of Laistrop w^t out my Consent or knowledge Don by a little Deed, w^{ch} gaue Possession & Seizeor &

³⁴ There is a reference to his baptism on p. 271 but it is more of a summary than a heading.

of y^e Land of Laistrop to M^r Francis Darley by M^r Willm Thornton by vertue of w^{ch} new settlmts was made, & othr vses Contrary to Articles of marrig This Deed dated Sept: y^e 9th: 1665.³⁵

[276] Of my desperate Sickness & dangerous Condittion I was vissited wth all begining on me August 16. 1666: And cleared of y^e flux of Blood

[282] <T.C.A.T:>³⁶

Appendix 2: Comparison of the entries about Elizabeth Thornton's death from *The First Book of My Life* and Comber 7

The passages are from BL, Add MS 88897/1, 98-9 (on the left) and Durham Cathedral Library, Comber 7, 155-6 (on the right); editorial conventions as in Appendix 1.

Elizabeth Thorntons death; y ^e 5 th : of	The death of my 3 ^d Childe my deare Betty.
September 1656:	who died the 5 th of September: 1656.
It pleased God to take from me my	-----
deare childe betty w ^{ch} had bin long in y ^e	I may not expect soe great a mercy w ^t out a
riketts & consumption gotten at first by	

³⁵ This is less obviously marked out as a heading but it does describe the content of the next three pages.

³⁶ Inserted at the top in a different ink. Denotes Thomas Comber and Alice Thornton, although the latter might refer to Alice Thornton Comber, Alice Wandesford Thornton's daughter, as this section discusses their marriage.

an Ague & much gone in y^e Ricketts w^{ch} I
 concea[ue]d was caused by ill milke at 2
 nurses. And not withstanding all y^e
 meanes I used & had her wth Naly at S^t
 Mungnos Well for it she grew weaker &
 att y^e last in a most desperate Cough y^t
 destroyed her lunges, she died.
 Elizabeth Thornton my 3^d: Childe died y^e
 5th: of September 1656. betwixt y^e
 houers of 5 & 6 in y^e morning. her Age
 was one yeare, 6 months & 21 daies.
 was buried y^e same day at Catterick by
 M^r Siddall.

[followed by a prayer, which has its own
 heading: A Praier After y^e death of my
 3^d: childe Betty Thor[nton].]³⁷

seuere monitor. for I could not hope for
 my dere Bettys long life haueing begun in
 an Ague & a Cough – that strucke her into
 y^e Ricketts & Consumtion beeing got at
 first by ill milke of 2 nurrses And not
 withstanding all Possible meanes I vsed to
 her & had her att y^e weks at S^t Mongos w^t
 my little daughter Naly for it she did grow
 worse for it & very weake and in a Terrible
 Cough w^{ch} destroyed her Lungs That deare
 sweete Angell grew worse & indured it w^t
 infin[ite] Patience. & when M^r Thornton &
 I came to pray for her she held vp those
 sweete Eyes & hands to her deare father in
 heauen looked vp & cryed in her language
 dad. dad. dad, w^t such vemency as if
 inspird by her holy father in heaun to
 del[i]u[e]r her sweet soule into
 her heauenly Father hands. & at w^{ch} time
 we allso did w^t great Zeale deliur vp my
 deare Infants soule into y^e hand of my
 heaunly Father. & then she swetly fell

³⁷ See Thornton, My First Booke of My Life, 98-9.

asleepe & went out of this miserable world
like a Lamb

My hope is thee O Lord my great Creatore
of the fruit of my wombe that thou o Lord
who gaue this soule into me at y^e first. hast
now receaud her into thy heaunly
Kingdom. and freed her from all sinns for
she knew noe actuall and orriginall was
taken away in Baptisme and that as thou
my Sauior tould vs such Children inioye the
sight of thy Heaunly Father. O my deare
Lord I am content to part w^t her to thee
my God that gaue her & most happy am I
that y^u didst take her sweet soule a way
before she was Poluted w^t actuall Polution.

O blesed & praised & glorified be
thy holy name O Lord God of hosts for thy
mercy & goodness to me & to her soule in
freeing it from those miserys of this life
soe soone & consigning her to thy Glory

O Lord Pardon w^t was don amisse
against this sweete infant in any kinde
either by nurses or seruants neglect, or

Parsuts & make vs to follow her patienes &
innocenes & sanctify this Crosse to vs &
bless vs O Lord to brng vp o^r Children in thy
faith feare & love for Iesus Christ o^r Lord
his sake

My Deare sweete Beautifull Childe

Elizabeth Thornton my 3 Childe died y^e 5th
of Septembr 1656. betwixt y^e houers of 5
& 6 in y^e morning: her Age was one yeare:
6 months & 21: daies. Buried y^e same day
att Cattricke Church by M^r Siddall.